

# DPC Newsletter

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## Miscellaneous Agency Updates

### **Call for Proposals—\$18-20 Million**

The California Bay-Delta Authority Science Program is seeking to invest in projects that develop new knowledge about how water use and management activities interact with and affect key aquatic species and environmental processes across spatial and temporal scales. The geographic areas of interest are the San Francisco Bay Estuary and the Bay-Delta system. To access detailed information about this opportunity, please visit <http://solicitation.calwater.ca.gov> or call the PSP Helpline at (877) 408-9310.

In other CBDA news, stakeholder meetings and public workshops on CBDA's 10-year Finance Plan are underway. The purpose of these workshops is to identify funding targets and finance tools associated with each individual program. The CBDA will be considering this Plan at its October meeting. For more information on this and other CBDA news, go to [calwater.ca.gov](http://calwater.ca.gov).

### **CPR Report Released**

The Governor's California Performance Review (CPR) team has released its recommendations on State government reorganization; the report is available in its entirety at [www.cpr.ca.gov](http://www.cpr.ca.gov). The report recommends elimination of the Delta Protection Commission and several other State agencies, boards, and commissions. DPC's responsibilities would be transferred to a new natural resources agency. The CPR Commission is currently considering the report, and is holding public hearings. To date, three hearings have been held (Riverside, San Diego, and San Jose); hearings are also scheduled through September for Los Angeles, Long Beach, Fresno, and Davis. For more information on the dates, times, and locations of the remaining hearings, go to [www.cpr.ca.gov](http://www.cpr.ca.gov).

### **Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area Update**

Wildlife Area staff has come up with a planning process schedule and budget for the over 13,000 acres in new property added to the Wildlife Area since 2002. Mr. Dave Feliz, Dept. of Fish and Game staff, indicates DFG is pursuing a contract with a private consulting firm, EDAW, for preparation of the management plan. Mr. Feliz says the Wildlife Conservation Board has approved \$200,000 for this process; he expects the environmental document to take about 18 months to prepare once the contract with EDAW has been finalized.

### **Loss of Farmland Mapped for Greater Sacramento Area**

The Department of Conservation's Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program, part of the Division of Land Resource Protection, has released a report and maps detailing the urbanization in the six-county greater Sacramento area between 2000 and 2002. Two Delta counties — Sacramento and Yolo — fall within this six-county area. According to the report, the amount of urbanization in Yolo County nearly tripled over this two-year period, from 353 acres (1998-2000) to 1,260 acres; most of the conversions were due to construction of new homes in and around Woodland, Davis, and West Sacramento. Sacramento County had less acres converted between 2000 and 2002 (4,551 acres) than in the prior cycle (5,729 acres). For more information, call (916) 324-0859 or email [fmmp@consrv.ca.gov](mailto:fmmp@consrv.ca.gov).

## Update on Legislation of Interest

All three bills the Commission has been tracking — AB 2476, SB 86, and SB 1155 — passed both houses of the Legislature and are awaiting Governor Schwarzenegger's signature. The Governor has until September 30, 2004 to sign or veto legislation; if passed, the bills would take effect on January 1, 2005. The Commission has taken a position of support on AB 2476 and SB 86, but has not taken a position on SB 1155.

**AB 2476 (Wolk): Delta Protection Commission** — The version of the bill that was enrolled and passed on to the Governor contained some amendments, as compared to the version the Commission considered in July. Once this bill passed the Assembly and moved into the Senate, the bill language proposing changes in membership and addressing the terms of the Commission's Chairman and Vice Chair was deleted. The language on review and update of the Commission's plan, and some language regarding secondary zone areas, remain under consideration by the Governor.

**SB 86 (Machado): Delta Conservancy Program** — This bill proposes creation of a Delta Conservancy Program, to be administered by the State Coastal Conservancy, to address agricultural, economic, natural, recreational, and urban waterfront resources. The most recently amended version of this bill eliminates reference to DPC's resource management plan, including specific language on the goals of the program instead. The amended version also requires the Conservancy to work with the Commission in prioritizing the Delta's conservation needs.

**SB 1155 (Machado): Water Quality Standards, Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta** — This bill would require the Director of CA Dept. of Water Resources (DWR), in collaboration with the Secretary of Interior, to prepare a plan to meet all existing permit and license conditions for operation of the State Water Project on or before January 1, 2006. The plan would be completed and submitted to the State Water Resources Control Board and the CA Bay-Delta Authority before DWR would be allowed to increase its pumping from its current level of 6,600 cubic feet per second (cfs) to 8,500 cfs, as is proposed in the South Delta Improvements Plan and the comprehensive Delta Improvements Package.

More information on both of these bills, and all other bills under consideration, can be found online at [www.leginfo.ca.gov](http://www.leginfo.ca.gov).

## CA Delta RC&D Council Holds First Meeting

The first meeting of the California Delta Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) Council was held on August 11 at the Jean Harvie Community Center in Walnut Grove. The Council is a newly-forming nonprofit entity focused on finding creative solutions to economic and natural resource problems in Delta communities and industries. Currently, the Council consists of ten people representing county farm bureaus, Resource Conservation Districts, Delta Water Agencies, and other nonprofit entities operating in the Delta.

At the Council's August 11 meeting, the Board members formally approved their nonprofit Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws, as well as a two-year operating budget for continuation of RC&D activities (the group is currently operating from the work plan included within the group's two applications to USDA for a full-time coordinator to staff the nonprofit). The group opted to continue utilizing San Joaquin County Resource Conservation District as its fiscal agent, and to continue contracting with Mr. John Brodie, San Joaquin County RCD's watershed coordinator, in continuing its work in 2004 and 2005.

Also at that meeting, Assistant State Conservationist James Tillman announced that the CA Delta RC&D

Council would be receiving an additional \$10,000 in NRCS seed money to continue its work, in the absence of approval by USDA for a full-time coordinator for the group. The group had also received \$10,000 in 2003 for continuation of its outreach and program development efforts. Due to funding shortfalls in the national RC&D program, no new Councils were funded in 2004; the group's application remains under consideration for future funding cycles.

## New Delta Businesses Specialize in Guided Eco-Tours

There have been some exciting new developments in the industry of ecotourism in the Delta community of Walnut Grove of late! Staff is pleased to announce that some Delta citizens have decided to seek their fortunes in the exciting world of ecotourism by offering delightful excursions through Delta waterways. The Commission and its staff wish these Delta entrepreneurs great success in their new endeavors!

### Delta Ecotours

Dr. Jeffrey Hart, restoration ecologist, hosts tours of up to 25 people on the Tule Queen, a U.S. Coast Guard certified pontoon boat. Dr. Hart, best known in the Delta for his work with native plants, is also a U.S. Coast Guard certified boat captain. As a resident of the Delta for over five years, he has much to share about the rich natural and human history of the Delta.

Dr. Hart hosted several tours in August: Miner Slough to Steamboat Slough Loop; round trip to Liberty Island; and a ride around Grand Island. Tours for September include a loop around Georgiana Slough, the Mokelumne River, and Delta Meadows; Brannan Island to Sherman Island & Beyond; in-channel islands, and round trip to Liberty Island. In addition to these scheduled tours, Dr. Hart is happy to arrange special interest trips for government agencies, consultants, environmental and conservation organizations, birders, school groups, and other associations; groups of up to 25 people can be accommodated.

**For more information:** Call (916) 775-4545 or email [hartrestore@citlink.net](mailto:hartrestore@citlink.net)

### A & J Tours

Mr. Joshua Stark and his wife Agnes moved to Grand Island within the past couple of years, although Mr. Stark indicates he spent much of his childhood in the Delta. The Starks are very excited about their new endeavor providing guided tours of the North Delta and American River. As opposed to Dr. Hart's Delta Ecotours, which utilize the Tule Queen pontoon boat, A & J Tours utilizes canoes and kayaks to guide eager participants through North Delta or American River channels. The Starks offer several different trips, including half-day paddle tours, Delta fly fishing tours, kayaking weekends, and overnight excursions. They are also at your service if you are in need of a custom designed trip.

A & J Tours is suitable for any skill level, as they provide all gear necessary for a safe trip as well as any desired instruction on paddling safety and technique.

**For more information:** Call (916) 775-2122, visit [www.caguides.net](http://www.caguides.net), or e-mail [comments@caguides.net](mailto:comments@caguides.net).

## Status Update: DPC Recreation Inventory

Commission staff has been updating information contained in its 1997 Inventory of Recreation Facilities, currently available on the Commission's website, [www.delta.ca.gov](http://www.delta.ca.gov). Numerous online sources, as well as the Delta Boating Needs Assessment completed by The Dangermond Group in 2002 and the Commission's own list of projects approved in the Delta since 1993, are being used to update the inventory.

Generally, there have been very few substantial changes to private marinas since the inventory was prepared in 1997. Some have closed down or changed ownership; modifications to existing marinas have included the addition of guest docks, RV and vehicle parking, dry boat storage areas, and convenience stores or restaurants.

There have been some notable changes to public and nonprofit recreation facilities such as Sacramento County's Sherman Island access, Yolo County's Clarksburg access, The Nature Conservancy's Cosumnes River Preserve, and the City of Stockton's Morelli Park, including the addition of public restrooms, picnic and parking areas, and launch ramps. The cities of Sacramento and West Sacramento have constructed waterfront promenades to enhance their downtown areas, and the Delta communities of Walnut Grove and Isleton have added community docks to their waterfronts.

To date, inventory sheets and site visits have been completed for Sacramento, Yolo, and Solano County facilities, and staff is already receiving feedback from providers. Once the information on facilities in Contra Costa and San Joaquin Counties has been compiled (early September), it will be used to update the inventory document.

## **Bay-Delta Program Science Conference, October 4-6, 2004**

Want to hear the latest and greatest about developments in Delta science? Then you'll certainly want to reserve your seat for the California Bay-Delta Program's biennial science conference, to be held October 4-6 at the Sacramento Convention Center.

The Science Conference is an opportunity for the Bay-Delta Program to present the newest scientific information to the broad range of stakeholders working on Bay and Delta resource issues. The Conference will feature both talks and poster sessions on themes of interest to the program including water quality, ecosystem restoration, fisheries, levees, watersheds, and the integration of this information into program policy decisions.

Among the topics to be discussed are lessons learned from the Jones Tract levee breach, mercury considerations associated with wetland and shallow water habitat restoration, and water and sediment quality, among many others.

Costs for attending the three-day conference run from about \$50 (students) to \$145; the cost increases for registration after September 16. Participants may elect to attend one, two, or all three days of the conference, depending on their interests.

Detailed information on the Conference, including a schedule of presentations and conference registration, is available from CA Bay-Delta Authority's website: [www.calwater.ca.gov](http://www.calwater.ca.gov).